

Serial No. 10/789,998

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached drawing includes changes to FIG. 10. The sheet containing FIG. 10 replaces the original sheet including FIG. 10. In FIG. 10, the drawing has been amended to replace the non-English characters with English characters. No new matter is added.

Serial No. 10/789,998

REMARKS**RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER****MAR 14 2007****I. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS**

Claims 6-7 are cancelled.

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1-5 and 8-15 are pending and under consideration.

II. DRAWINGS

The drawings have been amended to contain English characters. It is respectfully submitted the objection is overcome.

III. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-3 UNDER 35 U.S.C 102(B) AS BEING ANTICIPATED BY MCMAHON (US 5,208,692)

Claim 1 has been amended to include somewhat similar features to that of cancelled claims 6 and 7. Accordingly, the arguments presented below in Section V of the present response regarding currently amended claim 1 are applicable here.

IV. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 4 AND 5 UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(A) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER MCMAHON (US 5,208,692)

Claims 4 and 5 directly depend from currently amended claim 1. Accordingly, the arguments presented below in Section V of the present response regarding currently amended claim 1 are applicable here.

V. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 6 AND 7 UNDER ET U.S.C. 103(A) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER MCMAHON (US 5,208,692) AS APPLIED TO CLAIM 1 ABOVE, AND IN VIEW OF AHMADVAND ET AL. (US 6,754,411)

Currently amended claim 1 has been amended to include somewhat similar features to that of cancelled claims 6 and 7.

Serial No. 10/789,998

Ahmadvand describes an invention utilizing a WDM demultiplexer. In particular, Ahmadvand describes in Fig. 3 the configuration of a 1:16 demultiplexer which is achieved by cascading a plurality of Mach-Zehnder Interferometers (MZI).

Ahmadvand neither teaches nor suggests the recitation when the physical branch ports formed by cascade connecting the optical multiplexing/demultiplexing is M ($M > N-1$), said branch port connecting section groups two or more branch ports of said M branch ports, and virtually considers these as $N-1$ branch ports, and connects between each of the branch ports of currently amended claim 1.

Further to the configuration described in Fig. 4 of McMahon, (when $N=4$) in view of the configuration indicated in FIG. 3 of Ahmadvand et al., physical branch ports is $M=4 > N-1$. Thus, grouping of two or more branch ports is needed. The Examiner asserts that the cascading of two or more multiplexers/demultiplexers is a common practice in the art, as disclosed by Ahmadvand (FIG. 3). However, the Applicants respectfully submit that the Applicants are unable to find a teaching within the cited documents regarding such a constitution of connecting branch ports.

Accordingly, the Applicants submit that neither cited document describes the aforementioned recitations of currently amended claim 1.

The above comments are specifically directed to currently amended claim 1. However, it is respectfully submitted that the comments would be helpful in understanding various differences of various other claims over the cited references.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

VI. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 8-15 UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(A) AS BEING UNPATENTABLE OVER MCMAHON (US 5,208,692) AS APPLIED TO CLAIM 1 ABOVE, AND IN VIEW OF PARK ET AL (US 2003/0058497)

Claims 8-15 directly or indirectly depend from currently amended claim 1. Accordingly, the arguments presented above in Section V are applicable here where appropriate.

It is respectfully submitted the rejection is overcome.

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Serial No. 10/789,998

MAR 14 2007

VII. CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: March 14, 2007

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1480, Alexandria, VA 22313-1480 on March 14, 2007
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Date: March 14, 2007